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# SURGERY

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February 7, 1957

Dr. Clarence Dennis  
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My dear Clarence:

Your letter of January 25th has come across my desk. The title of your Section suggests that you propose therein to reassess previously published papers. I would be very much inclined in the first few papers to give special notice to papers distinctly involving controversial matters --- especially those in which the author has participated in the controversy and is a critical person, whose opinion is awaited and sought in such matters. Is there any item of controversy involved in the Kay-Blalock paper? The publication of such papers will set a pattern for other papers which will come to you quite spontaneously. I do think you must be careful not to make this a general review section, in which the papers are very brief --- differing in this respect only from general reviews.

In accord with the suggestion initially made by you, the papers in this Section should involve matters which are essentially controversial and restate, reaffirm or contradict a previously published point of view by the author. If you get far beyond this, I am certain you are going to bring upon yourself, as well as other Editors of SURGERY, headaches which may be very difficult to explain away. I think Warren Cole once asked, what is the point of difference between his Section and yours? I certainly would omit illustrations --- at least for the time being. We must not get one or more Sections competing with one another.

Dr. Clarence Dennis

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February 7, 1957

You will find presently, I am quite certain, that papers will be coming to you for this Section without invitation. It would be a mistake to get too large a back log of invited papers awaiting publication. I would try to keep the interval at about 4 months between submission of paper and publication.

If for any reason it is not practical to put my paper on segmental resection in the April issue, I presume that Thal's paper could be pushed back an issue so that both could appear together in a later issue. It seems to me that you, Hurwitz and Mrs. Avis should do this Section without advices from Alton or me save as it relates to a special problem.

The uniform typing of the papers you sent along to me, which are now going forward to Mrs. Avis, suggests that you are re-editing them. Is this correct? If so, I would regard it as a rather dangerous thing to do. Suggestions for change can be made to the author --- but I do not believe that you or I should make them, save to correct a typographical error or a misspelled word. Authors are sensitive. Whereas we should strive for brevity in all the Sections, we do not want a Readers' Digest Journal. That is the function of Abstracts. With every good wish,

Sincerely,



Owen H. Wangensteen, M.D.

OHW/mjk

cc: Dr. Alton Ochsner  
Mrs. Mary G. Avis - Enc.